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Shielding Eyes Following Trauma: A No Pressure Situation

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(NO COMMENTS)

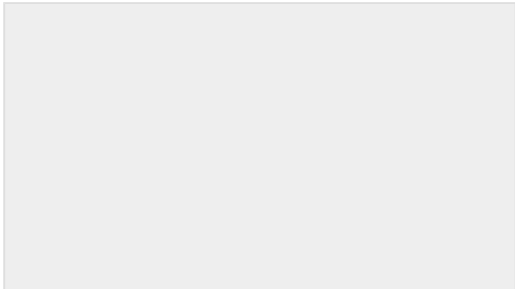
From the [Vision Center of Excellence](#)



As far as first-aid practices go, applying pressure to a wound is as basic of a rule as it comes. However, we all learned in school that there’s an exception to every rule. In this case, the eyes have it for circumventing the norm. In fact, applying pressure to an eye wound may cause permanent, irreversible damage, including blindness. That’s why the Vision Center of Excellence highly recommends the use of a rigid eye-shield to protect the injured eye.

Rigid eye-shields prevent pressure from impacting the injured eye and block particles from getting in the wound. Often by-standers are first on the scene when accidents happen. If they know how to use an eye-shield, they can save someone’s sight. Use this three-step procedure to secure the injury with an eye-shield before transporting the person to a medical facility.

Step 1: Survey – When you come upon an eye injury, first survey the situation. If the injury is from chemical exposure, immediately wash the eye to remove as much of the chemical as possible.



If no chemical exposure has occurred, do not put anything on the eye itself, especially if you think the eye is cut. Gently clean any dirt or blood from the affected area around the eye. Do **not** touch the surface of the eye.

Step 2: Shield – Use the rigid eye-

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Rigid eye-shields act as a barrier to pressure and additional environmental hazards (e.g., dust, debris, smoke), and protect the eye by providing a safe enclosure until additional medical attention is available. (From the Vision Center of Excellence)

shield provided in the Individual and Joint First Aid Kits or anything that provides a hard cover over the eye. If an eye-shield is unavailable, you can use protective eye gear, such as ballistic glasses or goggles, the bottom of a cup (e.g. Styrofoam, plastic, or paper) or a piece of cardboard shaped as a cone to cover the eye.

Secure the shield by applying tape from the cheek to the forehead. Use gauze,

cloth dressing, shoelace or string to secure in place if tape isn't available. It's important to **always** protect the eye with a rigid eye-shield prior to wrapping, and **never** place anything under the shield or directly on the eye.

Step 3: Seek – Seek care for further treatment and stop any activity that could cause pressure to the eye. You may decide to administer medication that will prevent the patient from coughing, sneezing, vomiting or making any other movement that could compound the eye injury and cause serious damage. If evacuation will take more than 3 hours, administer the antibiotic tablet in the combat pill pack, as long as it doesn't cause nausea.

Bystanders are often the first on-the-scene when accidents happen. Knowing how to use a rigid eye-shield is a vital to preventing further damage while in transport or waiting for care. It prevents pressure from impacting the injured eye and blocks particles from getting in the wound. Addressing these two things when accidents happen greatly contributes to saving someone's sight.

Visit the "[Shields Save Sight](#)" campaign website today for additional resources, and join our community on [Facebook](#) & [Twitter](#).

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U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Ryan Jones, a crew chief with the 169th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at McEntire Joint National Guard Base, South Carolina Air National Guard, cleans an F-16 Fighting Falcon fighter jet canopy, Sept. 8, 2013. Members of the 169th Fighter Wing are beginning a Certified Readiness Evaluation with aircraft regeneration and acceptance. The CRE assesses a unit's ability to operate safely and efficiently in a deployed chemical combat environment. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Caycee Watson/Released)

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